

MISSOURI CONSERVATIONIST

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Serving Nature & You



Vantage Point

Child's Play

Since you're reading this magazine, I assume you have an interest in the outdoors. What do you think created that interest?

I used to spend hours as a child in the woods behind our house. I climbed trees, built hidden forts, scavenged for berries. I never knew what I'd find, and that was half the fun.

What connected me to conservation was my time exploring woods, fields and waters. It turns out that I'm not alone.

Environmental psychologist Louise Chawla studied what people thought created their interest in conservation. The influences named most often were:

- ▲ The experience of routine play in nature as a child.
- ▲ The influence of one or more mentors—usually family—who shared a love of the outdoors.
- ▲ Involvement in scouts or other outdoor-related organizations.

In the past few months I've attended national and statewide meetings that focused on how to enhance conservation education. The goal is always the same: to help people learn to live well with the natural world. The big question is: What works best to achieve this goal?

If we're going to be a society that supports healthy animal and plant life, as well as a thriving economy based on using natural resources in balanced and sustainable ways, two things have to happen. People need to understand how nature really works so they can work with it and, just as important, they need to care enough to try.

Making the second part happen is our biggest challenge today. With computer games, TV, declining green space and scheduled activities, children often don't have time for outdoor play. When do children experience the magic of discovering the life in a stream or woods on their own? When do they have a chance to climb a tree, catch a fish, or just watch the clouds float by?

Fortunately, finding adventure in nature doesn't require much in the way of space. Ken Finch, nature center leader and educator, simply let his kids dig a big hole to somewhere in his backyard. Their project quickly became the hit of their friends in the neighborhood.



Author Richard Louv suggests that we should think of time in nature not only as a way to better understand it, but as a prescription for health, an antidote to what he calls "nature deficit disorder."

Schools help kids connect with the natural world, but schools today have less funding for field trips, and teachers have to focus on the standards-driven subjects like reading and math.

As a state agency, we can't do much to help your children get outdoors to play, but we can help them explore nature in other ways. That's why we started the new Conservation Field Trip Grant for schools, support Outdoor Classroom grants and provide training for teachers in outdoor skills.

We also provide conservation nature centers and naturalists to help thousands of school children each year find their own wonder in nature, and we strive to make our education materials fit seamlessly with the concepts that teachers have to teach.

We do what we can, but only you, as family or friends, can create the chance for children to play in nature. You can act as a guide or simply keep a watchful eye. Children are naturally curious, and most are willing to get wet, dirty and really involved. Just provide the opportunity to get outdoors, and they'll do the rest.

If a healthy balance in nature is important to the quality of our lives, then surely the love of the outdoors is worth keeping alive. It's not that hard to start kids on a lifelong interest in the outdoors and conservation. In fact, it's as simple as child's play.

Lorna Domke, Outreach & Education Division Administrator

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Reflections

SECRET SPOT

The picture of the crappie stringer you showed in the Reflection Section belonged on the cover. If the largest five could have been weighed together, it probably would be a world record stringer—it was awesome!

Bob Bornholtz, Lake Ozark

I saw that picture of the lady with those huge crappie. Maybe Hazel Creek?

Johnnie Crain, via Internet

Editor's note: Lots of readers wondered where those crappie came from. I also fished for more information but came up empty. The woman in the picture prefers her fishing spot to remain secret.

NO-COST NATURE

I like all the helpful information on how to attract wildlife during the different seasons. Here in my part of Missouri, it seems people only get excited about hunting (mostly deer) or fishing. I rarely hear anyone talking about the beauty



BOXED IN

David Owen Roger who lives six miles south of Mountain Grove captured this close-up view of a box turtle that was crawling across his lawn.

we possess in our great state.

I suggest everyone appreciate the outdoors, even if it's only from your backyard or window. Nature is accessible to everyone in some way and—like your beautiful magazine—it's free.

Valerie Alexander, Greenville

ADHESIVE TICKS

After reading the article on ticks in the May *Conservationist* I thought I would share my solution for dealing with the pesky critters before they bite. Grab a piece of tape, any kind will do, and touch the sticky side of the tape to the tick. Fold the tape over on itself, covering the tick, and throw it away.

Helen Budinger, Harrisonville

Your excellent article on ticks did not go into enough detail about ehrlichiosis, which is fatal unless detected in time.

During one of our regular vacations near Warsaw, my husband got a tick on him. Two weeks later he began to run a temperature of 100. Four days later it went up to 102. An infectious disease

specialist in Kansas City diagnosed it as ehrlichiosis and gave him Doxycycline. I have never seen a man so sick.

If you feel sick after a tick bite, ask your doctor, "Is this ehrlichiosis?"

Juanita Gibson, San Juan, Texas

ERRATUM

The snake pictured in the "All About Albinism" article in the



June issue is an albino prairie king-snake, not a copperhead.

SPAGHETTI STING

In "Myths from the Deep," I read that catfish "barbels are as limp as cooked spaghetti and couldn't possibly hurt you."

When I tried to remove the hook from a small catfish I caught, the fish stiffened its whiskers and thrashed its head violently. A whisker impaled my hand about an inch deep, creating a painful stinging.

Russ Alford, Thayer

Editor's note: Catfish sting with spines contained in their pectoral and dorsal fins, not with their barbels. Catfish stiffen their spines as a defensive mechanism. Thrashing during handling could cause the spines to penetrate skin and cause pain. The smaller the catfish, the more difficult it is to avoid its spines.

CATCHING CRAYFISH

Your article on crawdads talks about using a wire-mesh trap to catch them. Do you have instructions on how to make this trap?

Lawrence Glover, Walnut Shade

Editor's note: Crayfish traps are simple to make. An effective trap allows large crayfish easy entry but frustrates their attempts to leave. Most traps are made of ¾-inch coated wire or plastic mesh with entry slots or funnels narrowing

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to no more than 1.5 inches high leading into the trap at one or both ends. The traps can be rectangular or cylinder shaped. Include a door in

the trap to make it easier to add bait or remove crayfish. Minnow traps would work, but their fine mesh would unnecessarily capture small crayfish.

The letters printed here reflect readers' opinions about the Conservationist and its contents. Space limitations prevent us from printing all letters, but we welcome signed comments from our readers. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Ask the Ombudsman



Q: I have been hearing that copperheads and black snakes are cross breeding. I didn't think different species could cross breed. How could this rumor get started?

A: This rumor is a pretty easy one to dispel since black rat snakes lay eggs and copperheads bear live young. Also, you're correct in that these are different species incapable of cross breeding. The Conservation Department's herpetologist said the laws of heredity prevent cross

breeding from happening. Because, the chromosome number for each species is different, it would be as impossible as a hawk mating with a chicken or a cat mating with a dog.

He said the rumor likely got started when someone saw a black rat snake with some patterns on its body, and wrongly assumed that it had resulted from a copperhead breeding with black rat snake.

Black rat snakes only turn black when they mature. Young black rat snakes have patterns, mainly gray with black blotches.

For more information about snakes please check these Web sites: <http://muextension.missouri.edu/explore/ag-guides/wildlife/g09450.htm>, <http://mdc.mo.gov/nathis/herpetol/snakep/>, or <http://mdc.mo.gov/nathis/herpetol/snake/snake1.htm>.

Ombudsman Ken Drenon will respond to your questions, suggestions or complaints concerning Conservation Department programs. Write him at P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, call him at 573/522-4115, ext. 3848, or e-mail him at Ken.drenon@mdc.mo.gov.



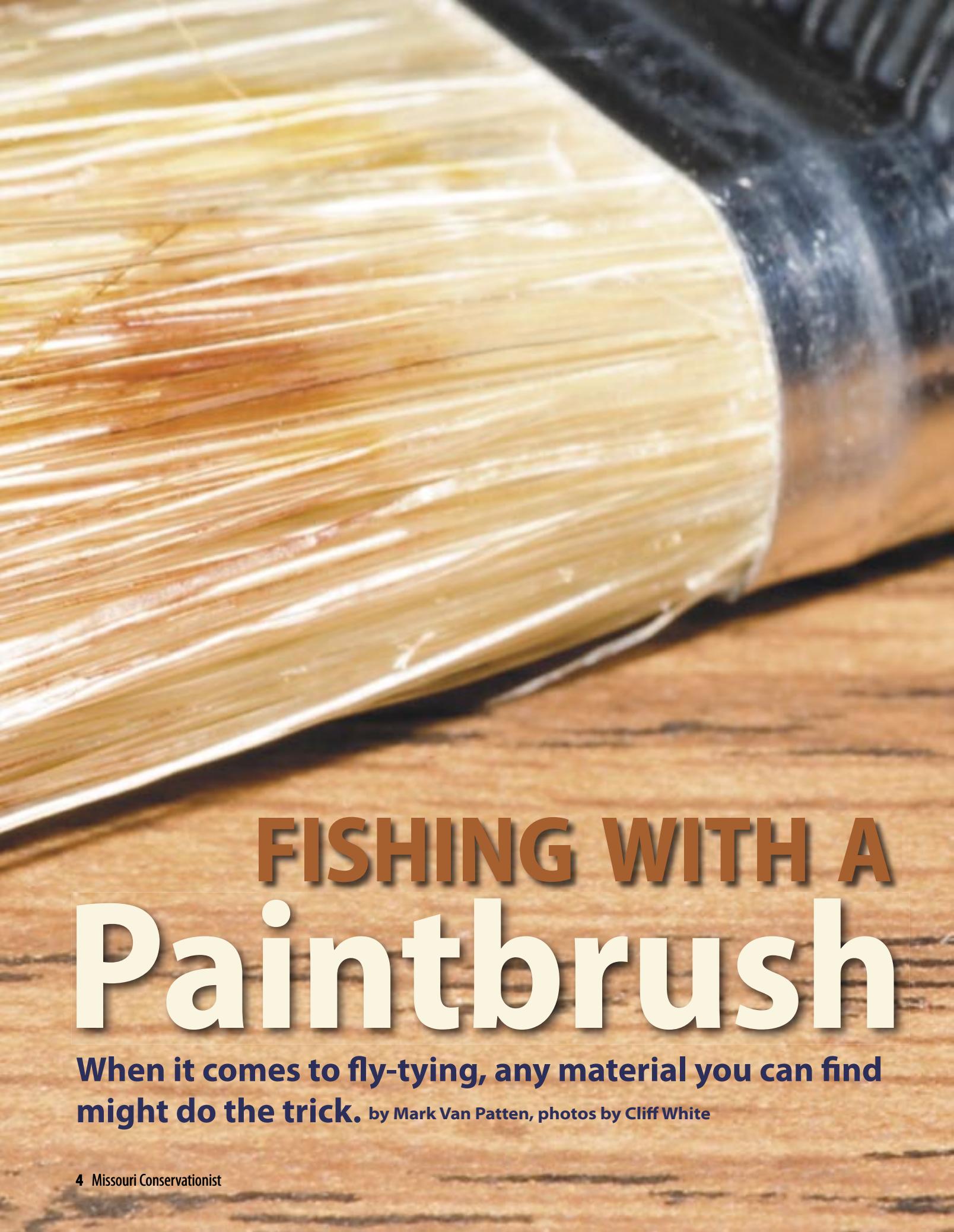
Typical black rat snake



Black rat snake with patterns



Copperhead snake



FISHING WITH A Paintbrush

When it comes to fly-tying, any material you can find might do the trick. by Mark Van Patten, photos by Cliff White



The resurgence of fly fishing brought about by that movie, "A River Runs Through It," has increased revenues in fly shops dramatically. Every wanna-be fly angler desires to be the best dressed on the stream. They look like they just stepped out of one of those high-priced, fly-fishing catalogues. Every fly angler who chooses to tie his or her own flies has to have the most expensive feathers and the latest materials.

Yes, I admit it. There is something about those extremely expensive, genetically engineered feathers that makes me drool. However, you do not need to invest a small fortune to have a great time tying flies and catching fish.

When I started tying flies nearly 40 years ago, many of today's materials did not exist and, at least in my part of the Ozarks, there was no such thing as high-priced feathers.

I was raised by a pair of pre-depression fly anglers. My grandfather and grandmother were as pure to the sport as anyone. They plucked feathers as we needed them from the four barnyard roosters that ran with our chickens. My grandfather was pretty proud of his chicken collection. He had one that was a perfect ginger color, one white, one grizzly and one black. There wasn't a dry fly made that he could not tie with a hackle from one of his own roosters.

Our roosters were pretty darn neurotic. I suppose it was because of the occasional grooming we forced on them. After a good plucking they would fight each other

and anyone else who happened to venture too close to them for a week.

We never ordered our fly-tying materials out of a catalog. We mostly used what we had around the house. We did buy our hooks and some thread from the fly shop at Bennett Spring. However, many of the materials we used were common household items. Granny's quilting thread was a bit heavy, but worked in a pinch. If you waxed the thread with candle wax it worked well and lasted at least long enough to lose your fly in a tree or to a big fish.

My grandfather and I were tying caddisfly adults one September when we ran out of white-tailed deer body hair for the wings of the adult dry fly imitation. It was still two months before the opening of deer season and the caddis hatch on the Meramec wouldn't wait that long.

Gramps went out to the garage and pilfered around for a while and came back in with a paintbrush. The paintbrush was old and well used. There was no telling how much lead-based paint and turpentine it had spread. The natural bristles had the perfect color and stiffness for the wings of our caddisflies.

One of my grandfather's most cherished possessions was a ball of yarn pulled from an old wool World War II army sweater. The color was a good match for scuds and native caddis larva found in many of the Ozarks spring-fed trout streams. The wool would soak up water allowing the fly to sink. He called his version of the fly an "army worm."

Gramps and I would collect tinsel from the Christmas tree and save it for flies. We reminded Granny to be sure and buy the gold tinsel as well as the silver. Gold is a great color for the trout at Bennett Spring. I discovered that the batting Granny used to make quilts took dye pretty well and made great dubbing for nymphs and dry fly bodies. Dubbing is fur, or a good substitute material, applied to a waxed thread then wrapped around a hook to make a body for many fly patterns.

The first dye I used was a tea made from the green husk of a black walnut. I found that if I added a little cream of tarter to the dye and then soaked the material a second time in some moss green Rit dye, the materials came out a beautiful olive color. Olive is one of the most prevalent colors in aquatic insects. Along with black and brown, it's one of my staple colors when fishing for trout.

We could get very inventive when it came to tying flies. We used to collect the white fuzzy stuff that came out of a milkweed plant. It made a good dubbing that repelled water fairly well, allowing the fly to float.

We often used pieces of yarn to make fly bodies. You





could change the thickness of the body by pulling the individual strands of yarn apart and only using two or three strands instead of a whole piece. A piece of a clear plastic sandwich bag made a good-looking shell-back for a scud or fresh water shrimp imitation.

For ribbing, we used fine copper wire from an old transformer, or a single strand of wire pulled from a multi-strand electrical wire. The wire added weight for flies we wanted to sink.

We had an English setter bird dog that provided an occasional clipping of hair, but the cats around the barn were our best source of dubbing fur. I would take a carding tool and give the cats a good brushing. The barn cats were pretty wild, so I had to wear leather gloves to protect my hands from their claws and teeth.

Before we could use the cat underfur, we had to wash it thoroughly. Otherwise, the fish would have smelled the predator.

I did a lot of squirrel hunting as a boy. We kept the tails and body fur for fly-tying. Squirrel tail is ideal for crayfish claws, wings on streamers, and tails on many

flies. Mixed squirrel body hair was perfect for scuds and buggy-looking nymphs.

Rabbits were also a great source for dubbing fur. Rabbit fur is one of the easiest furs to apply to the thread. Blends of squirrel and rabbit make some of the best dubbing available. Many manufacturers sell blends of rabbit and squirrel body hair dyed various colors.

If you live in town, hunting may not be an option for you, but there are many materials available right there in your own home to make a fly. Check out the stuffing in an old stuffed toy, animal or pillow. Pull out some dental floss for fly bodies. There is no limit to what might work for tying flies.

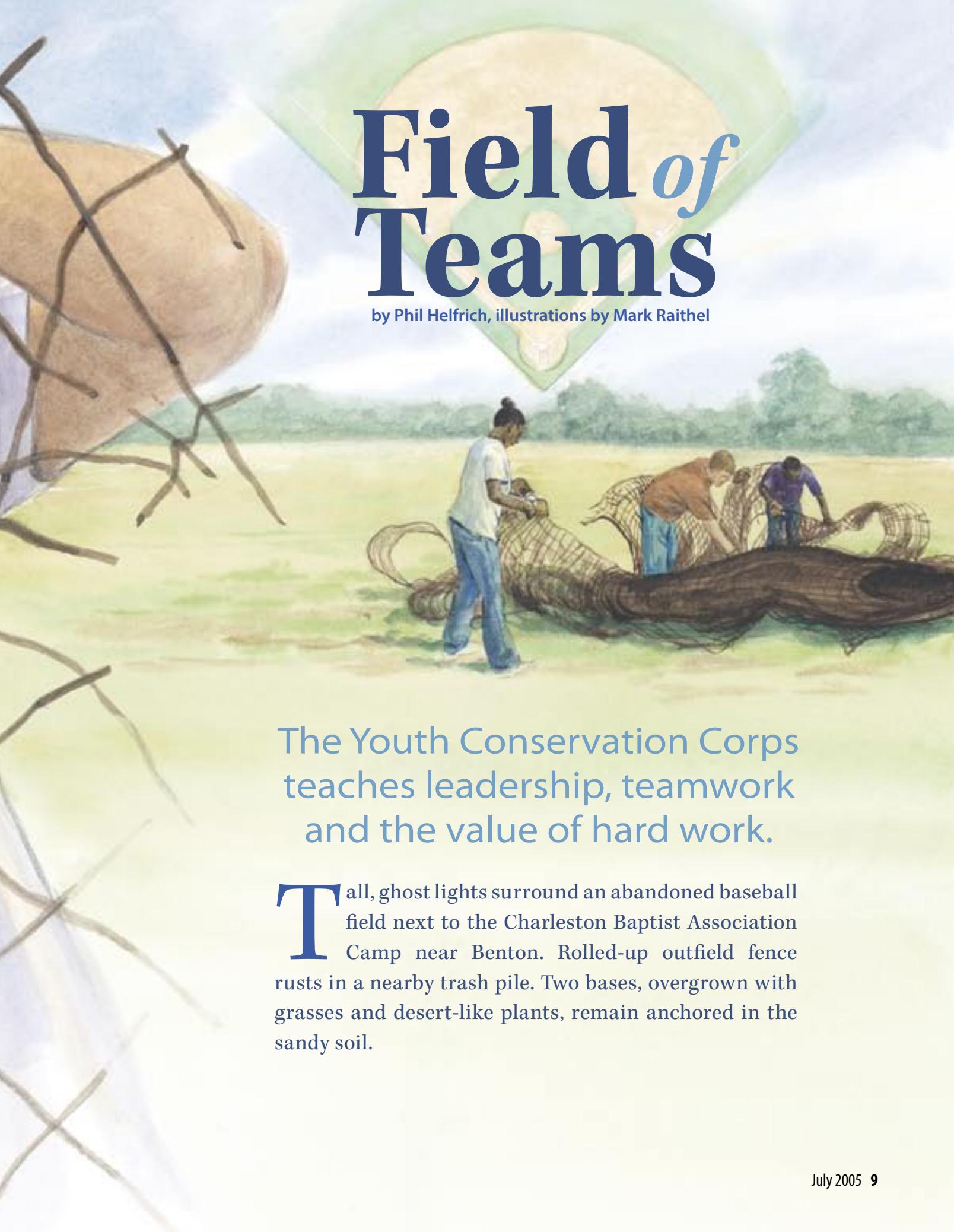
Tying your own flies is more fun and rewarding when you can turn junk from around the house into a fish-catching treasure. You might even catch the fish of a lifetime on one of your flies because your unique creation might pique the interest of a big fish that has seen all the standard flies.

And when someone asks you what you caught him on, you can proudly say, "A fly I tied myself." ▲



Field *of* Teams

by Phil Helfrich, illustrations by Mark Raithel



The Youth Conservation Corps teaches leadership, teamwork and the value of hard work.

Tall, ghost lights surround an abandoned baseball field next to the Charleston Baptist Association Camp near Benton. Rolled-up outfield fence rusts in a nearby trash pile. Two bases, overgrown with grasses and desert-like plants, remain anchored in the sandy soil.

Twenty-five years ago, local church teams spotted fly balls courtesy of those 1500-watt beacons. These days, another kind of illumination guides the teams of young men and women at work and play here. Under the summer sun these youngsters chase down native seed, swing away at invasive trees, dig firelines and, sad but true, throw out the last traces of the ball diamond.

"There's a couple of the poles we pulled out. Here's some of the fence we tore up. That building right there? We knocked it over," said James, pointing out projects his seven-member team completed over the summer of 2004. "It's one of the last sand prairies in Missouri and we're helping to preserve it. That's pretty cool."

James and his crew are part of a Missouri Conservation Department summer program. The Southeast Youth Conservation Corps is now in its third year of operation. Although there are additional SYCC crews in Marble Hill, Cape Girardeau, Scott City and Pilot Knob, James' crew is unique. At the end of the day, the members return to the same place—the Division of Youth Services (DYS) facility in New Madrid.

Those Were The Days

The idea of paying young people to improve the environment dates back to the Great Depression. Between 1933 and 1941, more than three million young men fought fires, planted trees, built parks and, most importantly, learned to care about the outdoors as members of the great social and conservation experiment called the Civilian Conservation Corps.

In Missouri, over 100,000 out-of-work "CCC boys" between the ages of 16 and 25 lived in 41 camps scattered around the state. For their work, they earned \$30 a week, \$25 of which was sent home to their parents.

This concept lives on as Youth Conservation Corps. Today, 32 states have Youth Conservation Corps, employing more than 23,000 young men and women annually.

For more information on youth corps check out:

- ▼ The National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) www.nascc.org
- ▼ Chris Kennedy or Phil Helfrich at the Conservation Department's Cape Girardeau office. Call 573/290-5730 or email *Chris.Kennedy@mdc.mo.gov* or *Phil.Helfrich@mdc.mo.gov*.

Prairie Home Companions

Southeast Youth Corps members range in age from 15 to 19. They come from rural and urban settings, representing a cultural cross-section. Many members hail from low-income families.

"When you come out here, you see a lot of stuff you don't hardly ever see. I think it's very educational," said Dustin, another member of the DYS crew. He likes the idea that he's doing something for more than his own gain. "It's helping my community," he said.

The Southeast Youth Corps is funded half by the Conservation Department's Outreach and Education and Human Resources divisions, and half by the following partner agencies: Cape Girardeau and New Madrid Missouri Mentoring Partnership, East Missouri Action Agency and the Division of Youth Services.

Dennis Reagan, director of the Cape Girardeau group, secured funds to pay youth salaries for the Marble Hill crew. "It's a great program. Young people gain work skills and learn about Missouri's conservation efforts," he said. "It's exactly the kind of thing these kids need."

Bob Gillespie, a natural history biologist with the Conservation Department, manages the sand prairie restoration. He coordinated projects with the crews. "What's most important to me, is I was able to give these groups of young adults projects, fairly difficult projects," said Gillespie. "They took pride in what they were doing, and they completed them with a fervor."

If anyone had the fervor it was Tonya, the only girl in the 2004 Marble Hill crew. Like many of the participants, this was her first job. She knew little about natural communities prior to working with them.

"Before, I didn't even know there were sand prairies in Missouri," said Tonya. "I thought prairies were in deserts or something."

With the help of a work-study internship through East Missouri Action Agency, Tonya continued working part time for the Conservation Department after the 2004 summer program ended. Then she went to work for the Southeast Youth Corps again, this time as a crewleader.

Win-Win

A nationwide study conducted by Abt and Associates in 1997 found that youth corps make a difference in young people's lives. The study determined that women and minorities, in particular, increased their educational attainment, improved their ability to get and hold a job, and participated in more civic activities like volunteering and voting after their experience in a youth corps.

Having worn both crewmember and crewleader hats, Tonya agrees.

"It brings people from different backgrounds together, and it teaches them about our environment and about work ethics all at the same time," said Tonya. "I saw a lot of changes in the boys on the crew. Like the one boy, his paycheck went to help his grandma. It made him mature a lot."

The same study reviewed numbers and found youth corps return \$1.60 in benefits, the value of corpsmembers' work, for every \$1 in costs.

In 2005, crewmembers who worked at least 300 hours received an Americorp Education Award of \$1,000 each. This is money set aside in each youth's name for college, trade or vocational school.

Funding for this award comes from the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps or NASCC.

New crewmembers make minimum wage, \$5.15 per hour.

Those returning for their second year earn \$6.15 per hour. After four weeks on the job, crewmembers are eligible for a 50 cent per hour raise.

The Conservation Department provides crewleaders, vans, tools, projects, crewleader training, environmental education and some youth salary funds. Partners provide the majority of youth salaries, job readiness training and things like boots and gloves.

Why it Works

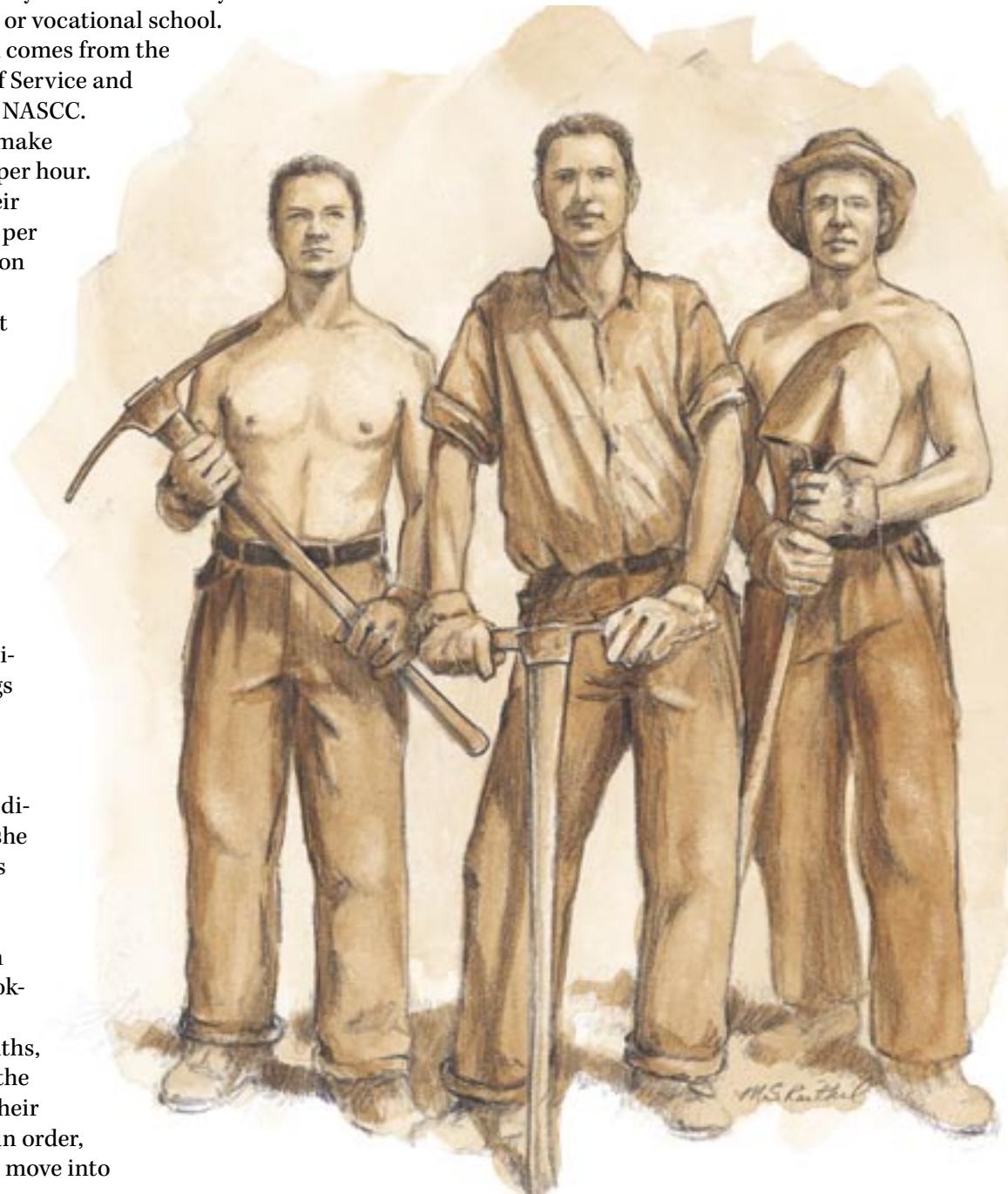
Sally Prouty, executive director of NASCC, says she knows why youth corps works.

"I saw hundreds of young men and women come into the corps looking down at their toes. After two or three months, they would look me in the eye and tell me about their plans to get their lives in order, to go back to school, to move into

jobs or college. They would talk about making good decisions and improving their chances for a better life. Every community should have a corps."

As for Tonya, she plans on going to college next year to study either business or the environment. She says the youth corps experience helped her because, "having a job helps you set your boundaries." Tonya said she was surprised to learn that Conservation Department worked with people as well as the land.

"I knew what the Conservation office was. But I didn't know how involved they were with the communities." ▲



“HUNTING and FISHING PARTNERS —*and Married*”

**Being married
helps Doug and
Carmen McNeely
enjoy more time
outdoors together.**

by Mark Goodwin
photos by Cliff White



Carmen and Doug McNeely

“I plan to be sitting in a tree somewhere this weekend,” high-school senior Tyler McNeely told me. “My parents will be, too.”

“Your parents bow-hunt together?” I asked. I knew Tyler because I’m a biology teacher at Jackson Senior High. I’d never met his parents, however.

“Have for almost 20 years,” Tyler said. “My mom has tagged 14 deer, including several nice bucks. One was big enough for the record book. My dad’s taken more than 20. We take our bow-hunting seriously.”

I have to admit that I don’t know of any other husbands and wives who bow-hunt together. Matter of fact, I don’t know of many husbands and wives who hunt together at all.

Curious about their approach to being a husband/wife hunting team, I phoned Tyler’s parents, Doug and Carmen, and they invited me over.

The next evening I pulled up in front of their home—a spacious log cabin that lies on a 90-acre farm east of Jackson. Their youngest daughter, 15-year-old Whitney, met





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me at the door and ushered me inside. A mantle filled with archery competition trophies caught my eye, as did a basket below the mantle filled with shed antlers.

Carmen and Doug were eager to talk about the outdoors. He said it represents a main focus in their marriage.

Doug first met Carmen at church when he was nearly 20 years old and she was a 16-year-old student. Her dad only let Doug come over to visit during the day. Carmen's family lived in the country and had a nice pond on their place. Carmen and Doug spent a lot of time fishing together.

"Our family row-cropped and raised cattle for a living," Doug said, "so I didn't have much time for fishing until I met Carmen. She taught me how to fish."

For well over a year, Doug and Carmen enjoyed daytime dates of catching bass and crappie and frying up their catch for meals. When Carmen graduated from high school, her dad relaxed restrictions on dating. Carmen and Doug knew they were a good match and within a year they married. A couple years into their marriage, Doug decided to try bow-hunting for whitetails.

"It didn't take long for bow-hunting to get deep in my blood," Doug said. "I wanted Carmen to bow-hunt with me. She wasn't sure about it. We had two young sons then, and Carmen did not know if she would have time. I tried to convince her everyone needs a little recreation. I have to admit I pushed hard for her to bow-hunt with me."

Carmen finally agreed to try bow-hunting. Doug bought her a compound bow. She practiced often and learned to shoot well.

She didn't tag a deer during her first season, but that made little difference. She was captivated by the sport and looked forward to every outing.

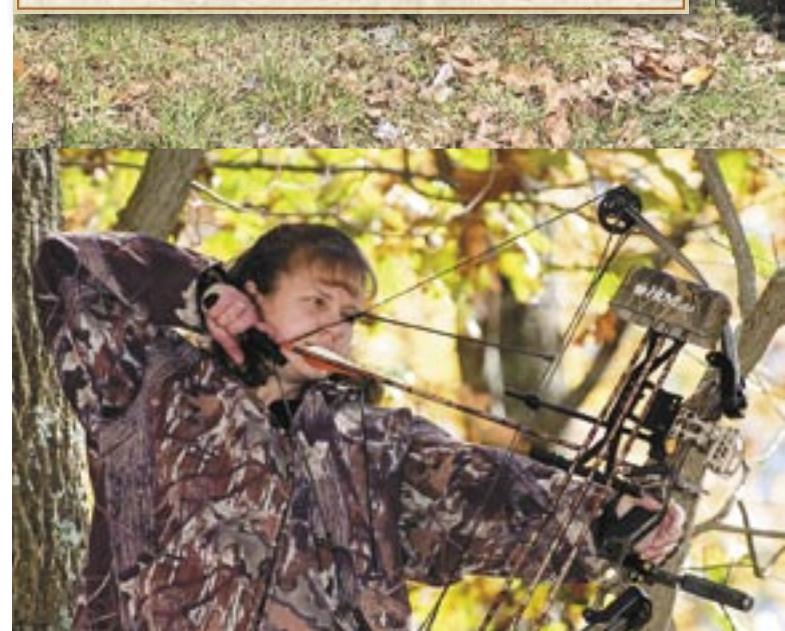
"Out in the fall woods, sitting in a tree with a bow across my lap is the perfect getaway," she said. "It allows me to forget about work, grocery shopping and the laundry. And then there's the smell of a damp, fall woods—you can't beat that aromatherapy."

Carmen's persistence and love of the sport paid off during her second season, when she killed a mature doe. She said she liked the idea of providing meat for her family.

Having lived all her life in the country, Carmen had little trouble enduring the mosquitoes, chiggers, ticks, poison ivy and bad weather that often torment bow-hunters. Carmen said a big part of the secret to her and Doug's hunting partnership is that she just takes whatever nature gives her and doesn't complain.



"We hunt and fish on the weekends, and we schedule our vacations so we can bow-hunt and fish together. Some couples like to go to Las Vegas for vacation. Well, Carmen and I like to take off for Colorado to bow-hunt for elk or to Mississippi to fish for crappie."



"Some people would start griping as soon as they got a little cold or a little hot or a little wet or if bugs were bad," Carmen explained. "I'm just not that way. I may say something when Doug gets too gung-ho while we are deer hunting, but I keep complaining to a minimum. Who wants to be around a complainer? Doug is also usually careful about keeping hunts in line with what I can handle."

Carmen and Doug both talk with enthusiasm about hunting and fishing together, but like any folks who hunt and fish a lot, they've had a few rough trips.

"We apply to bow-hunt for elk in Colorado every year," Carmen told me. On one of our first trips, being a



little green about hunting in the mountains, we found ourselves lost near the tree line at dusk. We spent the night on that mountain in freezing weather with no food or water. We huddled against a fallen spruce tree and covered ourselves with green-needed branches. I was worried about bears. We laugh about it now, but it was not funny then."

Carmen also told of a deer hunt in Illinois when they hiked three miles into a secluded spot that Doug had scouted and had found loaded with buck sign. "The ground was swampy, which made for tough walking, and I wore too many clothes. By the time we got to our spot, I was sweat-soaked and worn out, and I knew after the hunt I would have to repeat the whole process. That was not a fun trip."

"Anyone who fishes or hunts will have some rough trips," Doug said, but the bad times we've had hunting and fishing have been few and far between."

Because they both enjoy the outdoors, Doug and Carmen always have something interesting to talk about.

"If I tell her I've seen a big buck," Doug said, "Carmen wants to know every detail, and then she wants to hunt my stand! Of course, I'll let her."

Both Doug and Carmen hold full-time jobs. Carmen is manager of Human Resources Operations at Southeast Missouri State University, and Doug is a heavy equipment operator. They also raise cattle and have three children between the ages of 15 and 18. Although their lives keep them busy, they always find time to bow-hunt and fish together.

"Because we've made bow-hunting and fishing our priorities," Doug said, "we make time for them. We hunt and fish on the weekends, and we schedule our vacations around hunting and fishing. Some couples like to go to Las Vegas for vacation. Well, Carmen and I like to take off for Colorado to bow-hunt for elk or to Mississippi to fish for crappie."

"Fortunately, both grandmothers and my four sisters live close by," Carmen said. "When our children were young, they happily baby-sat them while Doug and I bow-hunted and fished. Now that the kids are older, that's not a problem. Both our boys also bow-hunt, and we all fish together."

Doug and Carmen bow-hunt and fish for the joy that comes from being in the outdoors and for the excitement and companionship that hunting and fishing offers. They began their friendship and love with fishing and continued it with bow-hunting.

"We have a great partnership," Doug said, "because we have never let being married get in the way of our enjoying the outdoors together." ▲



*These bullish bream
have a taste for escargot.*

Remarkable Redears

by Kenneth L. Kieser, photos by Cliff White





Bill Bennett, wearing his signature hat and the white beard, that long-time readers of the *St. Joseph News Press* would recognize at a glance, sat in the rear of a rather shaky round-bottom canoe and laughed at my efforts not to tip the boat. Leaning past a certain point to the right or left would likely have meant getting dunked in the cold water of Pony Express Lake.

I think he would have enjoyed seeing me get wet—even if it meant he would have taken a chilly bath, too.

I was a fledgling writer when Bennett, now deceased, invited me to pursue his favorite fish on a chilly May morning. We both enjoyed popping up big bluegill with artificial bugs on light-action fly rods. My outdoor writing mentor decided I was ready to take on redear sunfish, his favorite panfish heavyweight.

Redear sunfish are common in Missouri. Bennett assured me that a redear fights like a bluegill with added weight. Considering how hard bluegill fight, I was itching to battle a redear.

Bennett had positioned us parallel to a submerged tree. We had quietly dropped small anchors on each end of the unsteady craft and were casting tiny black artificial ants attached to two-pound leaders.

We carefully laid each cast across the rotting wood so our bugs would sink between branches. Bennett was the first to raise his rod and drive a hook into a hungry redear. The wide fish turned sideways and made his eight-foot rod bend. I was amazed at its strength and energy. It fought with the muscle and stamina of a much larger fish.

After several deep and dogged runs, the pound and a half fish slid into Bennett's hand for a quick release. A few seconds later, I noticed my line move slightly sideways. I set the hook and was immediately welcomed with a remarkable pull.

My fish, the same size as Bennett's, dove deep then turned sideways, using its flat body to increase resistance, an old bluegill trick. I doubted that my light leader would hold.

I hung on, giving and getting back line until the redear succumbed. Before releasing the saucer-shaped fish, I marveled at its bold yellow, green and black coloring. My first redear left quite an impression.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, redear fishing in northwestern Missouri's Pony Express Lake was spectacular.

Fishing success has slowed somewhat due to low water levels that reduced the lake's vegetation, but numerous other lakes in Missouri offer excellent redear fishing.

"People who catch a redear often think they have a bluegill," said Harold Kerns, fishery regional supervisor for Northwest Missouri.

Kerns said redear sunfish are similar in appearance and shape to bluegill, but redear can be distinguished from other sunfish by their yellow to yellow-orange belly, long, sharply pointed pectoral fin and light colored, sometimes reddish-orange border of the ear flap over the gill cover. Redear also generally run larger than other sunfishes. It is not uncommon to catch redear sunfish weighing more than a pound.



Redear usually remain in shallow water, making them accessible to shore anglers. These large panfish fall for the same lures and baits used for bluegill.

Southern states that have longer periods of warm weather resulting in longer growing seasons can brag of redear over four pounds, but Missouri's redear also grow pretty big. Glenda Gollaher caught the current Missouri state record of two pounds, seven ounces, from the Whetstone Creek Conservation Area in 1988.

Redear in Public Lakes

| | | |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| Ashland Lake (University of Missouri) | Boone County | 12 acres |
| Austin Community Lake | Texas County | 22 acres |
| Bilby Ranch Lake | Nodaway County | 110 acres |
| Binder Community Lake | Cole County | 150 acres |
| Blind Pony Lake | Saline County | 195 acres |
| Busch CA Lakes (Nrs. 6 20 21 30 34 35 37 and 38) | St. Charles County | |
| Bushwhacker Lake | Vernon County | 157 acres |
| Council Bluff Lake (US Forest Service) | Iron County | 440 acres |
| Crowder State Park Lake (Mo. DNR) | Grundy County | 21 acres |
| Cypress Lake (on Otter Slough Conservation Area) | Stoddard County | 95 acres |
| DiSalvo Lake (on Bismarck Conservation Area) | St. Francois County | 210 acres |
| Duck Creek Nr. 1 | Stoddard County | 1,713 acres |
| Happy Holler Lake | Andrew County | 62 acres |
| Harmony Mission Lake | Bates County | 96 acres |
| Hunnewell Lake | Shelby County | 228 acres |
| Indian Creek Lake (on Poosey Conservation Area) | Livingston County | 192 acres |
| Jamesport Community Lake | Daviess County | 30 acres |
| Kellogg Lake (City of Carthage) | Jasper County | 25 acres |
| Lake Girardeau | Cape Girardeau | 162 acres |
| Little Dixie Lake | Callaway County | 206 acres |
| Lone Jack Lake | Jackson County | 35 acres |
| Miller Community Lake | Carter County | 27 acres |
| Perry County Community Lake | Perry County | 101 acres |
| Rinquelin Trail Community Lake | Maries County | 29 acres |
| Sims Valley Community Lake | Howell County | 41 acres |
| Sterling Price Community Lake | Chariton County | 35 acres |
| Watkins Mill State Park Lake (Mo. DNR) | Clay County | 100 acres |

William Hargrove caught the previous record of two pounds, four ounces in 1974 from Lake St. Louis. Who would have imagined that his record would hold up 14 years and that it would be topped by only three ounces?

Redear are native only to the southern and south-eastern parts of the state, but the fish are stocked

throughout Missouri where conditions are favorable to them. Redear do best in clear water with vegetation that holds snails and insects.

In fact, so fond are redear sunfish for snails that they have been used in hatcheries and ponds to reduce snail infestations.

James Fry, former Conservation Department fisheries division chief, conducted one of the earliest research projects on this species in 1964. His research led to redear stocking statewide where conditions allow redear survival.

Redear sunfish are often stocked in lakes and ponds managed by the Conservation Department. For information about these areas go to www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/.

The best redear lakes are usually extremely shallow and full of vegetation. Few deep reservoirs have redear populations.

Stocked redear sunfish can reproduce, but they are not as prolific as bluegill. Predators devour many of their fry, but usually some survive to grow to full size. Overpopulation is usually not a problem for redear in Missouri, but it has occurred in southern states. In fact, most anglers wish redear sunfish were more plentiful here.

"Landowners often want redear sunfish in their ponds because they grow larger than bluegill," Kerns said.

The Missouri Conservation Department does not provide redear for stocking in private ponds, but private fish dealers have them.

Redear are more difficult to catch than bluegill. Anglers should look for them in submerged trees, as Bennett



A bit of worm adds extra appeal to your small jig. Fish baits slow and close to the bottom.

and I did. Seldom will you find them deeper than six feet. A good time to catch them is during their breeding season, which runs from early May through early June. Redear often spawn on the deeper edges of bluegill spawning beds.

Favorite baits include bits of live worm, euro larvae or crickets. Some anglers even use snails to catch redear. Use tiny gold or black hooks.

Feathered $\frac{1}{100}$ -ounce jigs or small flies also work. Wet flies are preferred, but a redear will occasionally pop a top-water insect. Black or dark brown lures are best. Some anglers maintain that the fish mistake the flies for snails.

Generally, you'll have better luck fishing lures and baits slowly and just a few inches off bottom. Use small bobbers to keep your bait in front of fish. Redear will drop a lure if they detect resistance. Bites are generally light but, once hooked, a redear is anything but subtle.

Ice fishermen often find redears suspended in deeper water, where they are easily lured by the possibility of an easy meal. ▲







The Origin of a Fish

It's hard to know whether you've caught a wild or a hatchery-produced trophy.

by Marvin Boyer and George Kromrey, photos by Cliff White

That trophy fish you caught is something to be appreciated. You remember how it fought when you caught it, and you probably measured it and weighed it. You might have taken pictures of it, or even had it mounted. Did you ever wonder, though, where the fish came from? Whether it was hatchery-raised or grew up in the wild?

Missouri has more than 200 native fish species, plus several more species that are non-native but have established reproducing populations. Missouri anglers avidly seek about two dozen of these species.

In general, as long as adequate habitat exists for them, our native species sustain their numbers from year to year. The combination of natural fish reproduction with scientific management usually yields abundant fish and quality angling without the assistance of hatchery fish. Our sport fish management efforts mainly consist of adjusting fish populations by setting harvest limits (sizes and numbers) and seasons.

Conservation Department hatcheries work like factories to manufacture fun and challenges for Missouri anglers.

Different species of fish vary in their ability to sustain populations and harvest by anglers. Crappie and bluegill, for example, are fast-growing and reproduce in sufficient quantity to allow a generous harvest. Slow growing or fish with low reproductive rates can suffer greatly from excessive harvest and need more protection.

Sturgeon are good examples of slow growing and long-lived fish with low reproductive rates. For exam-

ple, lake sturgeon commonly live at least 40 years. One captured in Canada was 152 years old.

Although they eventually become large, lake sturgeon grow slowly. A fish tagged by Conservation Department researchers in 1979 was only 28 inches long when it was recaptured in 2003. In addition, most sturgeon can't spawn until they are more than five years old, and even then they don't spawn every year.

Fish Stocking

Although wild fish are the largest component of most fisheries, we sometimes stock waters with hatchery-produced fish where natural reproduction isn't keeping up with harvest, or in special situations.

The Conservation Department has five warm water hatcheries and one rearing station that supply fish for Missouri waters.

One of the most common uses of hatchery fish is where habitat is not available for successful spawning or rearing of young fish. In some cases, such habitat is just too limited to enable fish to reproduce enough to satisfy angler demands.

In such situations, we usually stock high numbers of small fish—usually two to eight inches long. Predators eat many of the stocked fish, but some of them survive to become targets for anglers.

Native species managed with this type of maintenance stocking include sturgeon, paddlefish and walleye in rivers and impoundments, and channel catfish at many conservation area lakes.

We also stock adult fish in some waters. Called put-



Fish production combines nature and science. Many keeper-size hatchery fish are caught soon after release, but a few escape harvest and grow to be lunkers (opposite).

Pond Stocking

The Missouri Department of Conservation provides fingerling largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish for the initial stocking of new or renovated ponds.

The fish can be obtained free of charge from the Department's Private Pond Stocking Program. To be eligible for participation, the pond must meet the following requirements:

- Water must be at least eight feet deep.
- The water and shoreline must be protected from livestock use.
- The dam must be constructed for permanency and water tightness.
- No undesirable fish species, other than minnows, may be present prior to stocking.
- Water quality must be sufficient to ensure the survival of the stocked fish and sustain good fishing.
- Stocking will not endanger species of conservation concern.

Landowners interested in participating in the program must submit a completed pond stocking application by July 15th.

Applications for fish are available at offices of the Missouri Department of Conservation, from conservation agents, and from most agricultural agencies (NRCS Offices). For more information, go to <http://mdc.mo.gov/fish/stock/>.

Participating landowners are not obligated to allow public use of their pond or property, but are encouraged to permit a reasonable amount of fishing. However, fishing is subject to regulations of the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.





and-take, this strategy provides keeper-size fish in waters that are subjected to extremely high fishing pressure, including urban fisheries, kids fishing ponds and trout parks. Given the number of anglers enjoying these resources, natural reproduction and growth could not possibly sustain quality fishing. We stock some waters daily and some monthly, after raising the fish to harvestable size in hatcheries.

Trout and muskie wouldn't exist in Missouri or many other Midwestern states if they weren't produced in hatcheries.

Yet, trout fishing is one of the most popular outdoor recreations in Missouri. We support trout populations with fish raised at five coldwater hatcheries.

Muskellunge fishing also has a dedicated following, and the muskies we stock in select waters provide Missouri anglers the chance to catch the fish of a lifetime.

Growing Up Wet

Different species of fish grow at different rates, and depending on food and competition, fish in one lake might grow at a different rate than fish in neighboring waters.

It might take anywhere from two to four years, for example, for a crappie to grow to nine inches long in Missouri, or 10 to 16 years for a blue or flathead catfish to reach 40 pounds.

Most Missouri fish have fairly consistent growth rates, however. It usually takes six years for a redhorse sucker to grow to 15 inches long, and nine years for a river small-mouth bass to reach three pounds. Largemouth bass and walleye usually reach that weight in six to seven years.



Whether raised from eggs in hatcheries (opposite) or spawned in the wild, fish that grow to a hefty weight are challenging to catch and trophies to admire.

In addition, our hatcheries supply fish to restore or establish populations in suitable, but unoccupied habitat. These fish go into new or renovated public lakes to establish sport fisheries.

We continually monitor fish populations in Missouri waters to identify needs and opportunities to bolster fish populations. We also try to reestablish fish populations in waters they formerly inhabited.

Biologists look for opportunities to diversify fishing opportunities by introducing species into existing public lakes that have available habitat. Sometimes, we can improve the quality of angling by introducing predatory fish to keep prey fish species from overpopulating.

In such cases, the Conservation Department stocks only native, formerly native or established species within their historic or established ranges, and only after determining that existing sport fisheries and native populations of fish and other aquatic organisms will not be harmed. ▲



Fall events WOW Missourians

Families and individuals are invited to take part in the WOW (Wonders of Wildlife) National Outdoor Recreation and Conservation School at two Missouri locations this fall. The sessions will take place Sept. 17 at Big Spring in the Ozark National Scenic Riverway south of Van Buren and Oct. 7 through 9 at Roaring River State Park south of Cassville.

The events will include classes on archery, canoeing, fishing, fly-fishing, hunting, natural history, shooting, primitive skills, outdoor cooking and outdoor adventures. The sessions are suitable for learning new skills or improving existing ones. All are taught in the field with a focus on conservation, safety and outdoor ethics. For more information, call 800/334-6946 or 877/245-9453.

WOODPECKER ONCE THOUGHT EXTINCT FOUND IN ARKANSAS

Bird enthusiasts around the world got the thrill of a lifetime in April when one of North America's most spectacular birds seemed to step back across the threshold of extinction.

Ornithologists have considered the ivory-billed woodpecker—North America's largest woodpecker—extinct for decades, though unconfirmed reports continued to crop up sporadically. Now experts from the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology have seen, photographed and recorded the species in Arkansas Cache River National Wildlife Refuge.

Mature ivorybills can be 20 inches long, compared to 16.5 inches for pileated woodpeckers, which are common throughout much of the eastern



A century-old mount of an ivory-billed woodpecker

Don't dump live bait!

With fishing season in full swing, anglers need to know that how they handle live bait could have a tremendous effect—for better or worse—on future fishing opportunities.

When leaving your favorite lake or stream, it's tempting to dump bait into the water to give fish a free meal. But sometimes, invasive exotic species are sold as live bait. The culprits can be exotic minnows, worms, mussels or other species. Crayfish are especially dangerous because they are able to survive for days out of water and may travel overland.

When exotics get loose, they can upset the ecological balance of Missouri waters, endangering native species, including sport fish.

Instead of dumping live bait, put it in a sealable plastic bag or other secure container, and deposit it in a dumpster or other trash receptacle. For more information about protecting Missouri fishing from exotic invaders, visit www.protectyourwaters.net.



United States, including Missouri. Ornithologists say the ivorybill sighting in Arkansas already has touched off a flurry of reports from other areas, where the similar-looking pileated woodpecker is common.

Ivorybills once thrived in the vast forested swamplands of the southeastern United States. Their decline paralleled the destruction of their habitat through logging and draining of swamps.

Ivory-billed woodpeckers' bills are pale colored, while those of pileated woodpeckers are black. Ivorybills have white feathers on the tops and bottoms of their wings, forming a distinctive trailing edge that is visible while the bird is perched. Pileated woodpecker wings have white only on their underside, near the armpits. The white is not visible while the birds are perched. Ivorybills have black chins, while those of pileateds are white.

Ivorybills' calls have a honking quality, like a tin trumpet. The call of the pileated woodpecker is a loud, raucous cackling. In flight, ivorybills glide on outstretched wings. The flight of pileated woodpeckers typically has an undulating flap-drop, flap-drop pattern.

Birdwatchers who want to see the ivory-billed woodpecker can visit designated sites at Dagmar Wildlife Management Area in Arkansas. For a map, visit www.fws.gov/cacheriver/index.html. For more information about ivory-billed woodpeckers, visit www.bna.birds.cornell.edu/BNA/demo/account/Ivory-billed_Woodpecker/.



HABITAT HINT: Sericea eradication best done early

Is your land starting to look dull and uniform? Maybe you should check to see if you have an invasion of sericea lespedeza.

Sericea is an exotic member of the pea family that can rapidly crowd out the variety of native plants found in natural prairies, glades and savannas. The loss of natural biological diversity is bad enough; worse yet, sericea has very hard seeds that have little nutritional value for livestock or wildlife.

Sericea infestations are most easily eradicated when detected early. Clover, partridge pea, Illinois bundleflower and Korean, Kobe, slender and round-headed lespedeza are good replacements for sericea. First, though, you have to get rid of it. This can be done by spraying it with herbicide several summers in a row.

Any Conservation Department or Natural Resources Conservation Service office will help you determine if you have sericea and offer eradication advice.

Mistaken identity costly for swans, hunters

Carelessness on the part of five hunters resulted in the deaths of a trio of trumpeter swans at Robert E. Talbot Conservation Area in Lawrence County last January. The hunters said they thought they were shooting at snow geese. Conservation Agent Don Ruzicka investigated the incident.

The hunters were ordered to pay a total of \$5,487.50 in fines, restitution and court costs. They also received 180-day suspended jail sentences and lost their migratory bird hunting privileges for two years. In addition, they were ordered to speak to students in hunter education classes about the importance of identifying game positively before shooting.



NATIONAL ENVIROTHON COMES TO SMSU

Dozens of environment-savvy youths from across the nation will converge on Springfield July 18 through 24 to compete for scholarships, equipment and bragging rights in the 2005 Canon Envirothon. Teams of high-school students qualify for the national event in regional and state competitions. State qualifiers demonstrate their knowledge of soil and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and environmental issues in the week-long event at Southwest Missouri State University. Details about the national program are available at www.envirothon.org. For information about the Missouri program, visit www.maswcd.net/envirothon.htm.

Salt River Folklife Festival CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY

If you have ever wished you could go back to the 19th century, Florida, Mo., is the place to be Aug. 13 and 14. That's when the Salt River Folklife Festival will celebrate its 25th anniversary. The town turns into a time machine each August with living-history programs straight out of Lewis and Clark's century.

Reenactors in period garb go about the daily business of bygone days, tanning hides, forging iron tools and hand-crafting items ranging from wooden barrels and wicker baskets to children's toys. The savory smell of frontier cooking fills the air, and vendors offer souvenirs of every description.

Admission is free. Exhibits run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Friends of Florida and the Monroe County Historical Society sponsor the event.





No MOré Trash offers shotshell bags

Car owners can buy litter bags to stash their trash, so why not hunters? As an extension of the No MOré Trash! program, the Conservation Department now offers a bag to help shooters keep track of spent ammunition. The rugged, green nylon bag measures 7x9x3 inches. Belt loops make it perfect for dove hunters or target shooters. It is large enough to hold two boxes of empty shotgun shells. The No MOré Trash! shell bag is available for \$10 through the online Nature Shop at www.mdcnatureshop.com.

TREEKEEPER TRAINING IS FREE

Learn about trees, their benefits and care, and get hands-on training in tree identification, biology, planting, pruning, and insects and diseases during a six-week, treekeeper training class at the Meramec Campus of St. Louis Community College.

Class size is limited to 25 students. Classroom instruction will run from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays from July 19 through Aug. 23. Field sessions will be run from 9 a.m. until noon on July 30 and Aug. 20.

The course is free. However, participants are asked to provide 24 hours of volunteer service after graduation. These hours may be fulfilled through tree-care projects in the participants' communities or through projects arranged by Forest ReLeaf. The volunteer work qualifies as Master Gardener service.

The Conservation Department cosponsors the classes. To register, call 314/984-7777. For more information, call 314/533-5323.



Telecheck set to enhance game law enforcement

Some hunters worry that trading the old physical deer and turkey check stations for the telephone- and computer-based Telecheck system will lead to more poaching.

Sneaking game out of the woods is no easier under the new system than it was before. The immediate tagging requirement remains in effect, and a deer or turkey permit with the transportation tag removed is not valid.

Conservation agents also point out that switching from physical checking to electronic checking reduces the amount of time they spend on administrative work and increases time available for enforcement work. Agents spent an average of 40 hours—a full workweek—each year setting up and administering check stations.

Another advantage of Telecheck is instantaneous access to information about who has checked deer in their counties and whether those deer were bucks, does or button bucks.

For example, an agent might find several deer hanging from a hunting camp game pole. If the hunters claim they checked the deer but forgot to write the numbers on the transportation tags, the agent can simply dial up the Telecheck database and check the hunters' story.

Hunters in remote areas welcome Telecheck as a means to simplify checking compliance. Hunters are much more likely to check their deer when they can make a phone call instead of driving to a check station with their deer carcasses.

Conservation agents believe people who try to manipulate the new system will be the same ones who were inclined to cheat under the old one. Game laws work only when the vast majority of hunters believe in them and obey them. By doing so, law-abiding hunters enable conservation agents to concentrate on game thieves, ensuring that a few outlaws don't ruin things for everyone.

Telecheck is not without disadvantages. Agents will go to hunters if they need to verify information phoned in or logged over the Internet. But on balance, it is a good trade-off.

Hunters also can help put poachers out of business by reporting them to the toll-free Operation Game Thief hotline at 800/392-1111.





Lend a hand to clean up the Missouri River

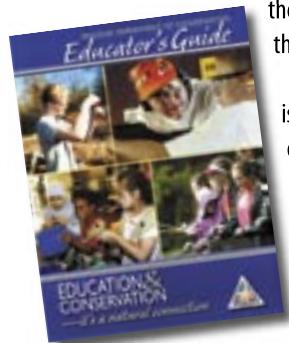
Missourians looking for a way to connect with nature and do something good for the environment might want to join upcoming Missouri River cleanups. Missouri River Relief has scheduled a cleanup around Boonville Sept. 24. Groups are asked to register in advance at www.riverrelief.org. More information is available at www.cooperslanding.net. Event sponsors include the Missouri departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, AmerenUE, Anheuser-Busch, American Compressed Steel, Bass Pro Shops, the City of St. Charles, the Great Rivers Greenway District, Lafarge North America, the Midwest Area River Coalition, REI Recreational Equipment, Tracker Marine, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Environmental Protection Agency. —Francis Skalicky

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE is portal to educational treasure trove

Missouri educators can choose from an amazing array of programs and materials that help them teach children about our conservation, nature and outdoor recreation. These range from hunter education classes and outdoor skills workshops to field trip grants, discovery trunks, publications, films and videos. The Conservation Department also provides classroom visits by naturalists and exciting curriculum materials designed to meet state requirements.

A new publication helps teachers from preschool through high school, home-schooling parents and Scout, 4-H and FFA leaders identify resources to add natural excitement to their programs. The "Educator's Guide" summarizes the full range of education assistance available through the Conservation Department.

The free, 12-page booklet (Item No. E00030) is available at Conservation Department regional offices statewide or from Conservation Department Distribution Center, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, phone 573/522-4115, ext. 3630, or by e-mail at pubstaff@mdc.mo.gov.



Anglers can keep Missouri free of used fishing line

Loose monofilament fishing line can be a real problem at popular fishing spots. Besides being a litter nuisance, wads of tangled fishing line can be fatal to birds and other wildlife that become ensnared in its loops. Now the Conservation Department has a way to ensure that used fishing line doesn't harm nature.

Through the Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program, anglers can be part of the solution to the monofilament problem. All they have to do is request plans for simple, inexpensive recycling bins made of PVC pipe and install them at favorite lakes and streams. Line collected from the bins is sent to Pure Fishing, a fishing equipment manufacturer headquartered in Spirit Lake, Iowa. The company will recycle the line to create artificial fish habitat structures.

The program is a natural fit for Stream Teamers, who already are engaged in conservation initiatives, and for No MOré Trash!, which aims to reduce litter. For details, contact Stream Team coordinator Mark Van Patten, mark.vanpatten@mdc.mo.gov, 800/781-1989, or visit www.mostreamteam.org.



TURKEY TAKE STRONG DESPITE WEATHER

Despite cold, windy and rainy weather, Missouri turkey hunters posted the fourth-largest spring turkey harvest in history this spring, checking 57,692 birds. The total included 53,798 birds checked during the three-week regular spring season and 3,894 during the two-day youth season.

This year's top harvest counties were Franklin with 1,048, Texas with 1,011 and Laclede with 897 turkeys checked. Regional harvest figures were: northeast, 8,615; northwest, 8,035; central, 7,880; Kansas City, 7,241; southwest, 6,887; Ozark, 6,491; southeast, 4,619; and St. Louis, 4,040.

No firearms-related hunting accidents were recorded during the youth season, maintaining a spotless safety record for the hunt's five-year history.



Outdoor Calendar

| Hunting | open | close |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Coyotes | 5/9/05 | 3/31/06 |
| Deer | | |
| Archery | 9/15/05 | 11/11/05 |
| | 11/23/05 | 1/15/06 |
| Urban Counties (antlerless only) | 10/7/05 | 10/10/05 |
| Youth | 10/29/05 | 10/30/05 |
| November | 11/12/05 | 11/22/05 |
| Muzzleloader | 11/25/05 | 12/4/05 |
| Antlerless | 12/10/05 | 12/18/05 |
| Turkey, archery | 9/15/05 | 11/11/05 |
| | 11/23/05 | 1/15/06 |
| Groundhog | 5/9/05 | 12/15/05 |
| Rabbits | 10/1/05 | 2/15/06 |
| Squirrels | 5/28/05 | 2/15/06 |
| Turkey, fall firearms | 10/1/05 | 10/31/05 |

Fishing

| | | |
|---|---------|----------|
| Black Bass (most southern streams) | 5/28/05 | 2/28/06 |
| Bullfrog | sunset | midnight |
| | 6/30/05 | 10/31/05 |
| Experimental Catfish Hand-fishing Season (on designated portions of Fabius, Mississippi and St. Francis Rivers) | 6/1/05 | 7/15/05 |
| Trout Parks | 3/1/05 | 10/31/05 |

For complete information about seasons, limits, methods and restrictions, consult the *Wildlife Code* and the current summaries of "Missouri Hunting and Trapping Regulations" and "Missouri Fishing Regulations", the "Fall Deer and Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information," the "Waterfowl Hunting Digest" and the "Migratory Bird Hunting Digest." This information is on our Web site at www.missouriconservation.org/regs/.

The Conservation Department's computerized point-of-sale system allows you to purchase or replace your permits through local vendors or by phone. The toll-free number is 800/392-4115. Allow 10 days for delivery of telephone purchases. To purchase permits online go to <http://www.wildlifelicense.com/mo/>.

AGENT NOTEBOOK

When it comes to squirrels,

it seems people either love them or despise them. When I was a kid, I can remember my grandfather live-trapping squirrels out of his garden and releasing them in a wooded area about ten miles away. His next-door neighbor drowned the squirrels he trapped to make sure they never returned. This sure didn't sit well with the neighbor lady who fed the "harmless" squirrels. Needless to say, a rift developed.



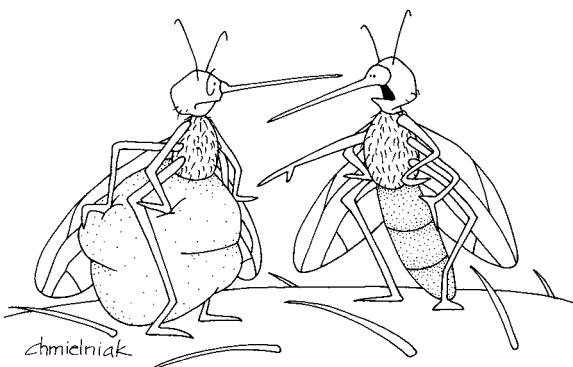
Each year conservation agents receive calls from concerned neighbors reporting "illegal" squirrel trapping. Conservation agents base their enforcement actions on the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*, which addresses the issue of nuisance animal trapping.

Except for migratory birds, deer, turkey, black bear and endangered species, wildlife that beyond a reasonable doubt are damaging property may be captured and/or killed by a property owner outside of regular hunting seasons and without a permit. The *Code* also includes regulations concerning trapping methods and procedures and the disposal of animal carcasses.

Although the *Wildlife Code* allows property owners to trap and relocate or use lethal means to control damage causing wildlife, property owners are encouraged to modify their property in ways that reduce the opportunity for animal damage.

Anyone who has had the misfortune of having squirrels chew through their roof and move into the attic can appreciate that the law permits them to take care of the problem without buying a permit and waiting for squirrel season to "hunt" the squirrels out of their home. A homeowner can take care of nuisance wildlife immediately by trapping out the animals themselves or by hiring a private nuisance animal control professional to remove the animals and block off points of access.

To keep the peace in the neighborhood, give consideration to concerned neighbors and make every effort to place traps in safe, discrete locations. Conservation employees can usually offer a variety of options to people seeking advice about controlling nuisance wildlife. —Scott Rice, Boone County



"Sylvia, I believe you have high blood pressure."

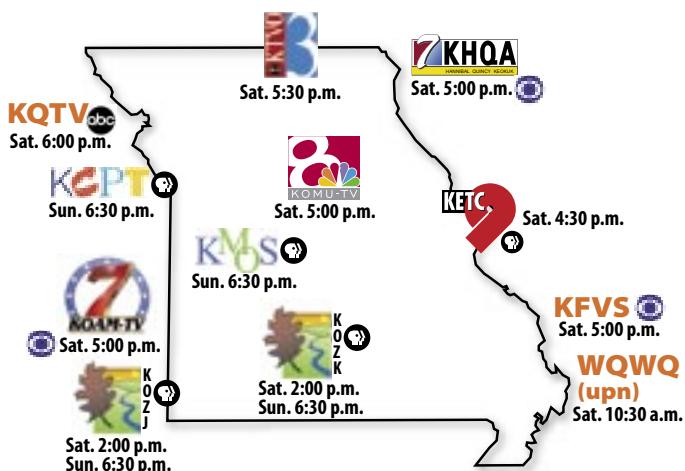


To learn about bobwhite quail management and Missouri's quail recovery efforts, check out www.missouriconservation.org
Keyword: quail



Program Schedule

Television the way Nature intended!



SHOW SCHEDULE

July 2 & 3—COTTONMOUTH

It's reptile week as we take a closeup look at the cottonmouth and collared lizard.

July 9 & 10—BIRDING

It's a special kids edition of MISSOURI OUTDOORS that's really for the birds!

July 16 & 17—MISSOURI'S TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

From its rich past to a future promise, the tallgrass tale is a truly American experience.

July 23 & 24—FISHING

Get hooked on fishing during this special kid's edition of "Missouri Outdoors."

July 30 & 31—MISSOURI RIVER

All aboard! For a weekend float or historical trip or clean-up cruise on the Missouri River.

Aug 6 & 7—CAVING

We're "Just Kiddin' Around" down under—underground, that is—in Missouri's caves!

OTHER OUTLETS

(Previously aired episodes are also shown on the following)

Brentwood BTV-10 Brentwood City Television

Columbia Columbia Channel

Hillsboro JCTV

Independence City 7 Cable

Joplin KGCS

Kearney Unite Cable

Parkville GATV

Poplar Bluff Poplar Bluff City Cable

Ste. Genevieve Ste. Genevieve Cable

St. Louis Charter Cable

St. Louis Consolidated Schools Cable

St. Louis City TV 10

St. Peters St. Peters Cable

Springfield KBLE36/MediaCom

Sullivan Fidelity Cable

West Plains OCTV

Meet Our Contributors



Marvin Boyer is a fisheries management biologist in the Conservation Department's St Louis Region. Hunting and fishing have always been his favorite pastimes. Spending time in the outdoors with their three children provide a lifetime of enjoyment for Marvin and his wife, Jennifer.

Freelance outdoor writer **Mark Goodwin** lives in Jackson and teaches biology at Jackson Senior High School. He enjoys a wide variety of outdoor recreation and spends the bulk of his free time with family and friends in the Missouri Ozarks.



Kenneth L. Kieser writes regularly for newspapers and outdoor magazines. He is an active member of the Southeastern Outdoor Press Association and the Missouri Outdoor Communicators. He says he spent his first 50 years in Missouri. He now lives near Kansas City, Kansas.

Community Outreach Specialist **Phil Helfrich** ran a greenway and a youth corps non-profit in Colorado before moving back to Missouri five years ago to work for Conservation Department in the Cape Girardeau office. He was formerly a guitar player for Steely Dan, and a tour guide.



George Kromrey is the Conservation Department's coldwater hatcheries supervisor. He's worked in both fisheries management and hatcheries for more than 28 years. He's had a lifelong interest in water and aquatic life, and enjoys fishing with his wife, Sandra, and their grown sons.

Mark Van Patten was a member of the first Stream Team in 1989. He later became Stream Team Coordinator for the Conservation Federation of Missouri and later joined the Conservation Department, where he holds the same position. Mark hosts a public television show on fly tying.





Boy With Frog

Remember how much fun you had as a kid when you stalked pond edges with a flashlight looking for frog eyes? Give your child the same wonderful memories. Frog hunting opens at sunset June 30. — *Cliff White*